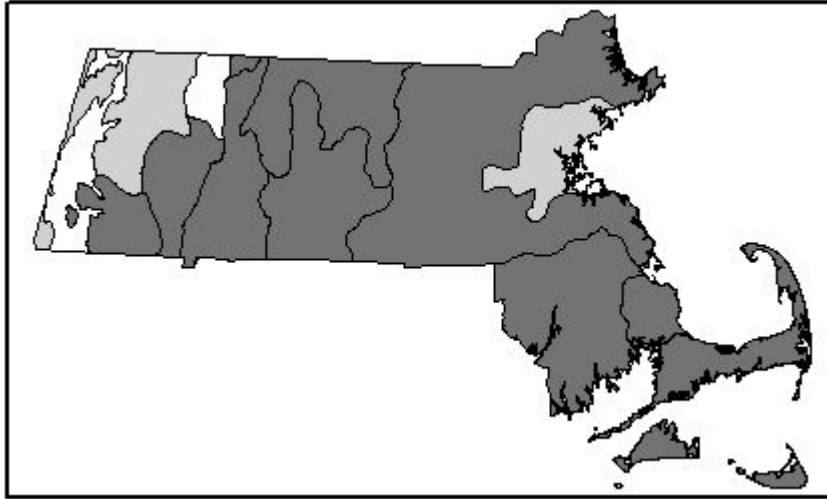


**Community Name:** PITCH PINE - OAK FOREST / WOODLAND

**Community Code:** CT1A200000

**SRANK:** S5



**Concept:** Dry oak / pine forest and woodlands of moraines, till, outwash, southerly exposures, and rocky slopes. Matrix forest of southeastern Massachusetts. The proportions of different species are variable, and range from predominantly pine with scattered oaks to predominantly oak with scattered pines. The structure ranges from open canopy with a thick understory, to closed canopy with scattered clumps of shrubs.

**Environmental Setting:** Dry, low nutrient, acidic soils of moraines and rocky slopes, also less disturbed sandplains, inland away from regular oceanic influences. Pitch pine - oak forests surround coastal plain ponds, pitch pine / scrub oak communities, and grade into coastal forests towards the ocean. The community is fire dependent, supporting increased white pine (*Pinus strobus*) and red maple (*Acer rubrum*) as time since the last fire increases. The time since fire or other disturbance is likely to be a factor in the proportion of pitch pine to oak.

**Vegetation Description:** Pitch pine - oak forests have a canopy of pitch pine and tree oaks (black (*Quercus velutina*), scarlet (*Q. coccinea*), chestnut oak (*Q. prinus*), and white (*Q. alba*)), with blueberries (*Vaccinium angustifolium* and *V. pallidum*), black huckleberry (*Gaylussacia baccata*) and other ericaceous shrubs forming an often continuous low shrub layer. Scattered patches of Scrub oak (*Quercus ilicifolia*) and bear oak (*Q. prinoides*) can be dense. Catbriar and other briars (*Smilax rotundifolia* and *Smilax* spp.) often make dense barriers around low, damp openings. The herb layer is generally sparse, with bracken fern (*Pteridium aquilinum*), wild sarsaparilla (*Aralia nudicaulis*), wintergreen (*Gaultheria procumbens*), Pennsylvania sedge (*Carex pensylvanica*), and, less commonly, pink lady's slipper (*Cypripedium acaule*). Occasional white pine (*Pinus strobus*) and red maple (*Acer rubrum*) contribute to the canopy.

**Associations:** Part of a continuum of dry, acidic communities that contain a variety of tree oak and pine species. More work is needed to define types.

**Habitat Values for Associated Fauna:** Supports many common and listed moths dependent on the oak and pine. The bird fauna is similar to that of oak woodlands: Rufous-sided Towhee (*Pipilo erythrophthalmus*), Pine Warbler (*Dendroica pinus*), and ruffed grouse (*Bonasa umbellus*) are common. Most common mammals of Massachusetts have at least part of their habitat in pitch - pine oak forests and none are particularly characteristic.

**Associated Rare Plants:**

NONE KNOWN

Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program, Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife

**Associated Rare Animals:**

ANISOTA STIGMA	SPINY OAKWORM	SC
EACLES IMPERIALIS	IMPERIAL MOTH	T
RHODOECIA AURANTIAGO	ORANGE SALLOW MOTH	T
TERRAPENE CAROLINA	EASTERN BOX TURTLE	SC

**Examples with Public Access:** Myles Standish State Forest, Carver/Plymouth; Hyannis Ponds WMA, Barnstable; Francis Crane WMA, Falmouth; Montague Plains WMA, Montague.

**Threats:** Many acres have been lost resulting in fragmentation of occurrences. Fire exclusion is changing the character of the community, allowing less fire tolerant species to establish and sometimes results in more severe fires when they do occur.

**Management Needs:** Reintroduction of fire with prescribed fire in manageable conservation areas.

**Synonyms**

**USNVC/TNC:** Pinus rigida - Quercus (coccinea, velutina) Woodland Alliance -- Pinus rigida - Quercus (coccinea, velutina) /Schizachyrium scoparium Woodland [CEGL006166] and Pinus rigida - Quercus velutina / Hudsonia tomentosa Woodland [CEGL006120]; Pinus rigida - Quercus (velutina, prinus) Forest Alliance -- Pinus rigida - Quercus (velutina, prinus) Lower New England, Northern Piedmont Forest [CEGL006290]; Pinus rigida - Quercus (alba, stellata) Woodland Alliance -- no community described for New England.

**MA (old name):** Part of SNE DRY OAK/PINE FOREST ON SANDY/GRAVELLY SOILS and part of SNE DRY OAK/PINE FORESTS ON ACIDIC BEDROCK OR TILL [CT2G2A1000].

**ME:** Includes parts of: Pitch pine Woodlands AND Oak- pine forest Community.

**NH:** 1998 - Pitch pine- Appalachian oak/heath forest -- Pinus rigida - Quercus (rubra, velutina, alba, coccinea) / heath. 1994 - Dry Pitch Pine-Appalachian Oak Forest.

**VT:** Part of: Pine-oak-heath sandplain forest.

**NY:** Pitch pine - oak Forest.

**CT:** Pinus rigida- Quercus coccinea Woodlands; also Quercus velutina - Pinus rigida forests; Pinus rigida - Quercus stellata Woodlands.

**RI:** Pitch Pine - Oak forest.

**Weatherbee:** Part of: Dry Acidic Oak / Conifer Forest Community.

**Author:** P. Swain

**Date:** 10/23/00